

REMARKS

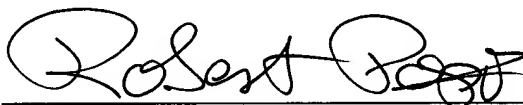
Claims 1-16 are currently pending in the application, and are subject to a restriction/election requirement. In particular, the Examiner has found that the claims are directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention: Species I (Figure 1), Species II (Figure 2), Species III (Figure 3), Species IV (Figure 4), and Species V (Figure 5). The Examiner has requested Applicant under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The Examiner further opined that currently no claim is generic.

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's requirement for election, and brings to the Examiner's attention MPEP 803, which directs Examiners to examine an application on the merits, even though it may include claims to independent or distinct inventions, as long as the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden on the Examiner. A serious burden may be shown by the Examiner by appropriate explanation of separate classification, or separate status in the art, or different field of search, as defined in MPEP 808.02. The Examiner has made no such showing in the present application, and Applicant thus respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the requirement for election and examine the application on the merits.

To comply with the requirement for a responsive reply, Applicant hereby provisionally elects, subject to the foregoing arguments, Species I for prosecution on the merits if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Elected species I corresponds to claims 1-9.

No additional fees are believed to be due. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may in fact be due, and to credit any overpayment to deposit account no. 12-0415. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 12-0415.

Respectfully submitted,



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